European Journal of English Language Teaching
ISSN: 2501-7136
ISSN-L: 2501-7136
Available on-line at: www.oapub.org/edu

doi: 10.5281/zenodo.1493541 Volume 4 | Issue 2 | 2018

AN ANALYSIS OF ESL ORAL PRESENTATION USING TRAIT AND STATE APPREHENSION

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Abstract:
There are several factors -internal and external- that may cause apprehension in oral presentations. Past studies have shown that trait and state apprehension can influence oral presentation among students. The main objective of this study is to look into the factors that cause apprehension for oral presentation among ESL learners. Specifically, this study explores how trait and state apprehension influence oral presentation. In addition to that, this research also investigates whether there are any significant differences of trait and state apprehension for oral comprehension across genders and faculties. The two main constructs are trait and state apprehension; while the variables are gender and faculties. 129 students participated in this quantitative research. T-test and ANOVA were used to find relationships and significant differences across gender and faculties. Results of this study reveal that both trait and state apprehension have different influence on oral presentation among students.

Keywords: oral presentation, internal factors, external factors, anxiety, apprehension

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

Oral presentation is a course taught in many universities as part of language proficiency course package. According to Al-Issa (2010), oral presentation prepares for life. This presentation skill trains students to be confident and courageous. However, many students fear oral presentation. Brooks and Wilson (2014) report that speaking in public

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in this type of situation can actually undermined students' confidence and students are "put in a spot". This is because apart from worrying about the content of the speech, they have to also worry about the audience expectation. In addition to that, Martin-Lynch, Correia & Cunningham (2015) also felt that social anxiety and public speaking anxiety may impact negatively on student engagement with oral communication. Hence, there are several factors-internal and external- that may cause anxiety about oral presentations.

Chandran, Munohsamy and Rahman (2015) investigated how Oral Presentation Anxiety (OPA) affected students from the Faculty of Engineering, McCroskey University. They found that the fear of oral presentations can be caused by individual characteristics. Some speakers fear audience, some have mental blocks while others lack confidence. In addition to that, Chen (2015) explored the connections between ESL students' speaking-in-class anxiety and their presentation performance He also looked into the factors that caused oral anxiety during presentations, and strategies to regulate L2 students' speaking anxiety in presentations. Findings of his research showed that the impact of external factors is greater than the impact of internal factors. Chen (2015) suggested future research on oral presentations to look into the influence of gender on oral presentation anxiety. He also proposed future research to look at the influence of internal and external factors on fear of oral presentation.

1.2 Objective

The main objective of this study is to look into the factors that cause apprehension for oral presentation among ESL learners. Specifically, this study explores how trait and state apprehension influence oral presentation. In addition to that, this research also investigates whether there are any significant differences of trait and state apprehension for oral comprehension across genders and faculties.

This research is based on the following research questions;

1. In what ways does trait apprehension influence oral presentation?
2. In what ways does state apprehension influence oral presentation?
3. Are there any significant differences of trait apprehension for oral presentation across genders?
4. Are there any significant differences of state apprehension for oral presentation across genders?
5. Are there any significant differences of trait apprehension for oral presentation across faculties?
6. Are there any significant differences of state apprehension for oral presentation across faculties?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

There are some reports saying that doing oral presentations only increase students' anxiety levels. According to Pineda (1999) and Miles (2014), oral presentations increases

students' apprehension and may also contradict with natural language acquisition. Apart from that, Ross (2007) adds that during presentations, the audience may or may not be interested in the contents of the presentation. Students' apprehension in oral presentation can be caused by two main factors. According to Santrock (2009), apprehension can be divided into trait and state apprehension. Figure 1 below shows the theoretical framework of this study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework of the Study

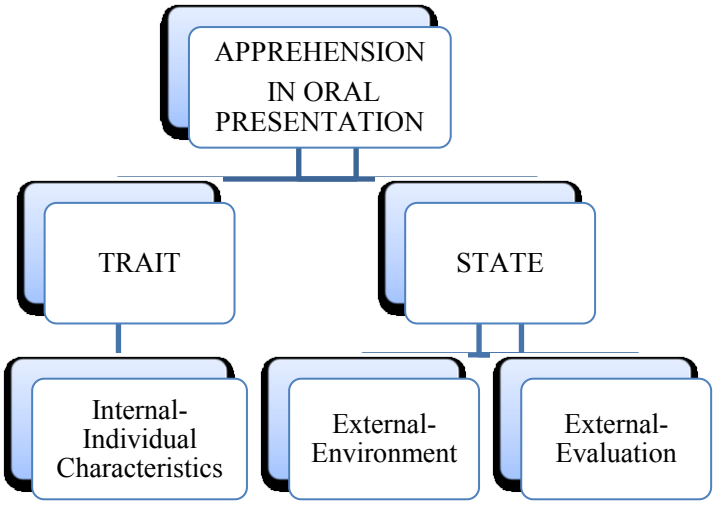

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the Study

2.3 Trait Apprehension

The first type of apprehension is state apprehension. According to Hatfield (2015), this category of anxiety develops in response to a perceived threat. A person who has this type of apprehension is unable to perform well in oral presentations because of his/her personal characteristics. One sign of trait apprehension is allowing nervousness to take over their presentation. Next, a presenter may worry too much about his/her insufficient preparation, or compare himself/herself with others or even fear they may forget his/her speech. He/she could also not be confident of his/her own ability, physical appearance. The speaker may also fear the audience.

2.4 State Apprehension

The next type of apprehension is state apprehension. According to Hatfield (2015), this type of anxiety describes the experience of unpleasant feelings when confronted with specific situations, demands or a particular object or event. State anxiety occurs when the presenter makes a mental assessment of some type of threat. Presenters may fear either their own physical portrayal, the environment or even the evaluation process. Students may fear the marks they will get for their presentation. They may also fear the size and composition of the audience, or even the venue or time of the presentation. They may also find their previous marks a threat (either lower or higher). Next, students may fear the perceived negative evaluation they think they will get form the

presentation. They worry about the impression the evaluators have on them. They also fear the opinions of the evaluators. They are afraid they would say the wrong things when they present.

2.5 Past Research

A study was done to look compare students' performance on written and oral assessments. Bhati (2012) investigated 412 finance students and 98 presentations in an Australian university. The study looked at correlations between oral presentations and other assessments. The findings concluded that students perform better in written assessments compared to oral assessment. The study also revealed gender differences on students' performance leads to the conclusion that female students perform better than male students in all forms of assessments except oral presentations where male students performed better although difference between males and females in oral presentation is not very large. The study of effect of gender and nationality of students on their performance can help in understanding the problems associated with particular groups of students. Female students were found to perform better than the male students in all forms of assessment except oral presentation. Some students may get stressed with issues like time given, audience expectation, or even place where the presentation takes place which could affect their performance since oral presentations.

Next, another study explored communication apprehension among learners. Kakepoto, Said, Umrani, and Memon, (2013) investigated communication apprehension among engineers in engineering workplace of Pakistan. Five (5) engineers from 2 engineering organizations of Pakistan participated in the study. Presentations were video recorded to explore communication apprehension traits that affected oral presentation performance of engineers. Data were analyzed qualitatively using oral presentation assessment rubric based on communication apprehension traits. The results of the study revealed that due to communication apprehension engineers' possessed poor credulity or confidence, poor gestures or purposeful use of body and faced nervousness that affected their effective oral presentation performance

3. Material and Methods

This section discusses the methodology of the research; namely, the research design, population, sampling, instrument, data collection procedure as well as method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design and Sampling

Figure 2 reveals the conceptual framework of the study. This study explores the factors that cause s apprehension in oral presentation among students. The two main constructs are trait and state apprehension; while the variables are gender and faculties. 129 students participated in this quantitative research they were students who enrolled for oral presentation course in UiTM Shah Alam. The students were from five faculties;

hotel and management, business management, art and design, architecture, planning and surveying and also applied sciences.

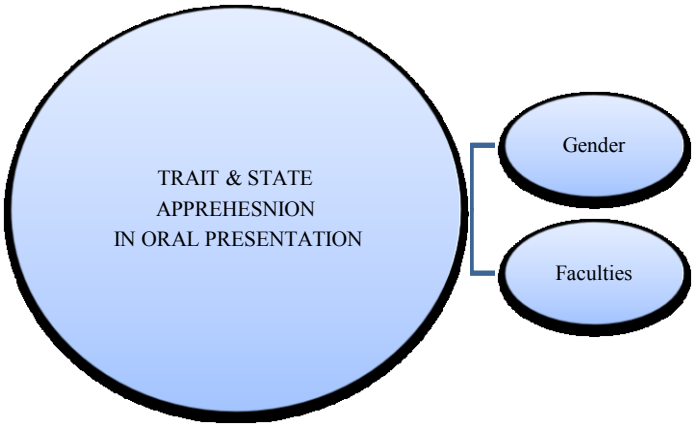

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

3.2 Instrument

The instrument used was a questionnaire. The questionnaire has three sections. Section A is the demographic profile, section B looks at trait apprehension (personal characteristics) and section C looks at state apprehension (environment and evaluation).

3.3 Data Collection and data analysis Procedure

At the start of the semester, students responded to the questionnaire. Data were analysed using SPSS. T-test and ANOVA were used to find relationships and significant differences across gender and faculties.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Trait Apprehension and Oral Presentation

Research question 1: In what ways do trait apprehension influence oral presentation?

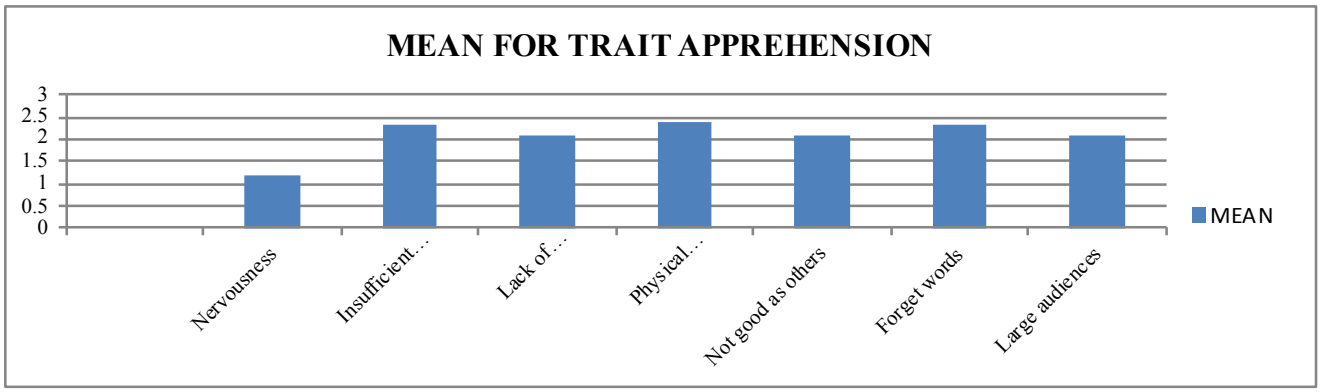

Figure 3: Chart showing Mean for Trait Apprehension

Figure 3 above shows the mean scores for trait apprehension. The highest mean is physical appearance (2.4), followed by feeling of inadequate preparation (2.3) and also forgetting words (2.3) during the presentation. Hatfield (2015) also reported that a great worry of presenter besides the content of the speech, is the physical portrayal of the speaker himself/herself.

4.2 State Apprehension and Oral Presentation

Research question 2: In what ways do state (environment and evaluation) apprehension influence oral presentation?

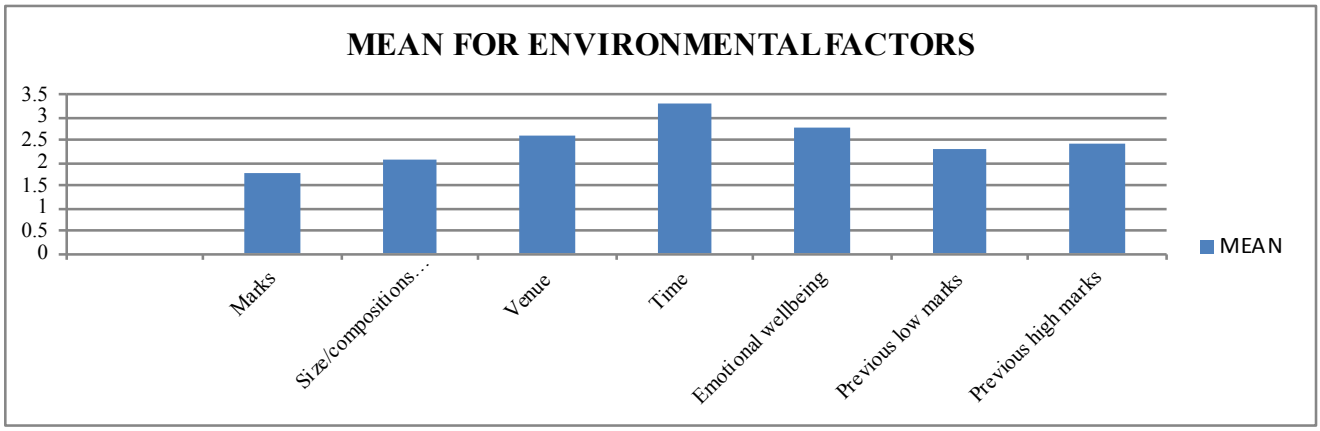

Figure 4: Mean for State Apprehension-Environment

Figure 4 shows the mean scores for state apprehension-environment. The biggest worry here is on the venue (2.6) and time (3.3) given to present. Hatfield (2015) and Bhati (2012) also revealed environment factors such as venue and time given as a major worry among presenters.

4.3 State Apprehension-Evaluation

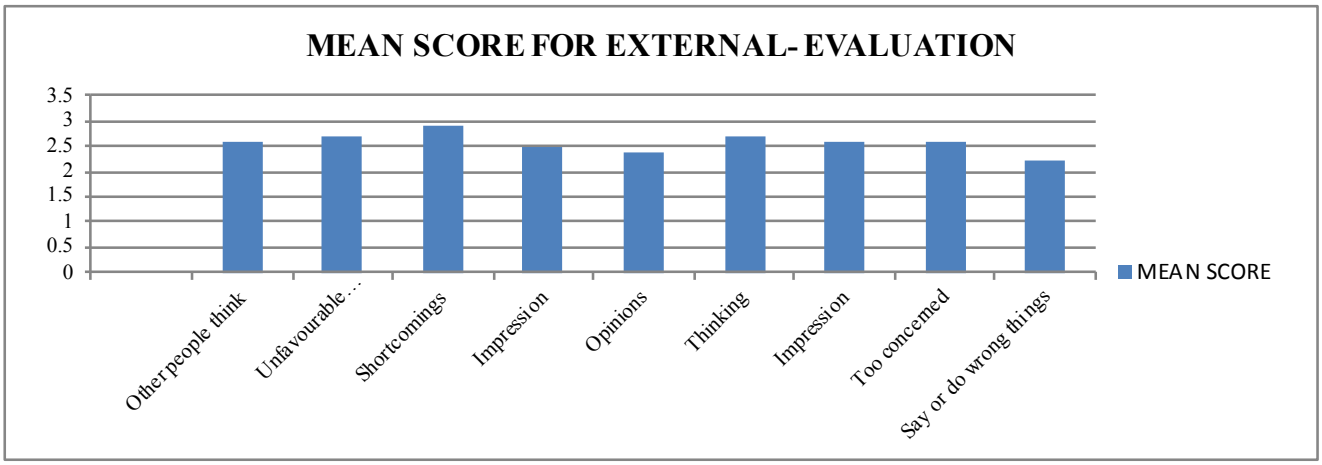

Figure 5: Chart showing mean for State Apprehension-Evaluation

Figure 5 above displays the mean scores for state apprehension-evaluation. Interestingly, the highest mean is "bothered with unfavourable impression" (2.7) and

"worry about what the audience is thinking" (2.7). Brooks and Wilson (2014) also reported that audience expectation is one of presenters' greatest worry.

4.4 Trait Apprehension across genders

Research question 3: Are there any significant differences of trait apprehension for oral presentation across genders?

Table 1: Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Internal- Individual Characteristics	male	24	2.2083	.87149	.17789
	female	105	2.1306	.69114	.06745

Table 2: Group Statistics

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Internal-Individual Characteristics	Equal variances assumed	.864	.354	.472	127	.637	.07772	.16451	-.24782	.40327
	Equal variances not assumed			.409	29.951	.686	.07772	.19025	-.31085	.46629

Table 3: Results of Independent T- Test comparing male and female in Internal- Individual Characteristics

Results	Independent T-test					
		n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	p
External-Environment	Male	24	2.21	.87	0.47	0.64
	Female	105	2.13	.69		

*T-test significant is at .05 (2 tailed)

Table 1, 2 & 3 indicate the result of mean score and standard deviation between male and female on internal factors. ($\bar{x}$ = 2.21) for male and ($\bar{x}$ = 2.13) for female. The Independent T-Test comparing between male and female reported that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean score (t (127) = .47), p = .64) at the 0.05 level.

4.5 State Apprehension across genders

Research question 4: Are there any significant differences of state (environment and evaluation) apprehension for oral presentation across genders?

Table 4: Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
External- Individual Characteristics	male	24	2.5536	1.51731	.30972
	female	105	2.4422	.68955	.06729

Table 5: Independent samples t-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Internal-Individual Characteristics	Equal variances assumed	0.6398	.013	.548	127	.584	.11139	.20316	-.29063	.51342
	Equal variances not assumed			.351	25.210	.728	.11139	.31695	-.54109	.76388

Table 6: Results of Independent T- Test comparing male and female for State Apprehension- Environment

Results	Independent T-test					
		n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	p
External-Environment	Male	24	2.55	1.52	0.55	0.58
	Female	105	2.44	.69		

*T-test significant is at .05 (2 tailed)

Table 4, 5, & 6 indicate the result of mean score and standard deviation between male and female on external factors. ($\bar{x}$ = 2.55) for male and ($\bar{x}$ = 2.44) for female. The Independent T-Test comparing between male and female reported that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean score (t (127) = .55), p = .58) at the 0.05 level.

4.6 Evaluation

Table 7: Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
External- Individual Characteristics	Male	24	2.7222	.52832	.10784
	Female	105	2.5397	.64355	.06280

Table 8: Independent samples t-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Internal-Individual Characteristics	Equal variances assumed	.721	.397	1.292	127	.199	.18254	.14124	-.09695	.46203
	Equal variances not assumed			1.463	40.223	.151	.18254	.12480	-.06964	.43472

Table 9: Results of Independent T- Test comparing male and female for in Fears of External-Evaluation

Results	Independent T-test					
		n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	p
External-Environment	Male	24	2.72	.53	1.29	0.2
	Female	105	2.54	.64		

*T-test significant is at .05 (2 tailed)

Table 7, 8 & 9 indicate the result of mean score and standard deviation between male and female on fears of negative evaluation. ($\bar{x}$ = 2.72) for male and ($\bar{x}$ = 2.54) for female. The Independent T-Test comparing between male and female reported that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean score (t (127) = 1.29), p = .20) at the 0.05 level.

4.7 Trait Apprehension across Faculties

Research question 5: Are there any significant differences of trait apprehension for oral presentation across faculties?

Table 10: Mean Score by Faculty for Trait Apprehension

	n	Mean	SD
Hotel and tourism management	40	2.32	.66
Business and management	10	2.31	.92
Art and design	26	1.97	.73
Architecture, planning and surveying	26	1.97	.86
Applied Sciences	27	2.16	.55
Total	129	2.15	.72

A one-way ANOVA between groups was performed to explore whether there is different in Fear of negative evaluation on students from different faculty. Students compared by five different faculties namely Hotel and Tourism Management, Business

and Management, Art and Design, Architecture, planning and surveying, and Applied Science. The mean statistic score by students faculty composition presented in Table 10.

Table 11: One-Way ANOVA on Trait Apprehension by faculty

Source	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	3.088	4	.772	1.492	.209
Within groups	64.176	124	.518		
Total	67.365	128			

The one way ANOVA result in Table 11 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the mean of Internal Factors for the five faculties, $F (4, 124) = 1.492$, $p = .209$. The effect size calculated using eta squared, was 0.05. This indicates that there is small difference in mean of internal factors between groups.

4.8 State Apprehension across Faculties

Research question 6: Are there any significant differences of state apprehension for oral presentation across faculties?

Table 12: Mean Score by Faculty for State Apprehension-Environment

	n	Mean	SD
Hotel and tourism management	40	2.66	1.15
Business and management	10	2.83	.64
Art and design	26	2.15	.88
Architecture, planning and surveying	26	2.37	.76
Applied Sciences	27	2.43	.55
Total	129	2.46	.90

A one-way ANOVA between groups was performed to explore whether there is different in Fear of negative evaluation on students from different faculty. Students compared by five different faculties namely Hotel and Tourism Management, Business and Management, Art and Design, Architecture, planning and surveying, and Applied Science. The mean statistic score by students' faculty composition presented in Table 12.

Table 13: One-Way ANOVA on State (Environment) Apprehension by faculty

Source	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	5.595	4	1.399	1.787	.209
Within groups	97.049	124	.783		
Total	102.644	128			

The one way ANOVA result in Table 13 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the mean External Factors for the five faculty, $F (4, 124) = 1.787$, $p = .136$. The effect size calculated using eta squared, was 0.05. This indicates that there is small difference in mean categories of external factors between groups.

Table 14: Mean Score by Faculty for State Apprehension-Evaluation

	n	Mean	SD
Hotel and tourism management	40	2.50	.62
Business and management	10	2.67	.69
Art and design	26	2.56	.70
Architecture, planning and surveying	26	2.63	.63
Applied Sciences	27	2.61	.57
Total	129	2.57	.63

A one-way ANOVA between groups was performed to explore whether there is different in Fear of negative evaluation on students from different faculty. Students compared by five different faculties namely Hotel and Tourism Management, Business and Management, Art and Design, Architecture, planning and surveying, and Applied Science. The mean statistic score by students' faculty composition presented in Table 14.

Table 15: One-Way ANOVA on State (Evaluation) Apprehension by faculty

Source	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	.420	4	.105	.262	.902
Within groups	49.723	124	.401		
Total	50.143	128			

The one way ANOVA result in Table 15 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the mean Fear of negative evaluation for the five faculties, $F (4, 124) = .262$, $p = .902$. The effect size calculated using eta squared, was 0.008. This indicates that there is very small difference in mean fear of negative evaluation between groups.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

To summarize, the findings of this study reveal that both trait and state apprehension can influence students' oral presentation. Trait characteristics such as worry over own personal appearance, worry about inadequate preparation as well as worry about forgetting words are found to be major factors. State characteristics such as venue, time as well as audience influence the presenter. While both male and female students are equally anxious over their oral presentation, gender difference does influence both trait and state apprehension among students from different faculties.

5.1 Pedagogical Implications and Future Research

How does the findings influence classroom teaching-learning? If students fear crowd, perhaps the evaluation of oral presentation could be done in smaller groups instead of in front of the whole class. After all, we are not training speakers to give speeches in large crowds for starters. Since male and female students are slightly different in the way they respond to surrounding environment, perhaps, students could be allowed to present in front of same genders. This can help to reduce apprehension among

presenters. Future research could look into the relationship of trait and state apprehension with oral presentation abilities.

Acknowledgements
The researchers would like to thank 129 students who participated in this study. They were from were from five faculties; hotel and management, business management, art and design, architecture, planning and surveying and also applied sciences. The researchers would also like to thank Nur Azwana Binti Ibrahim for helping out in the data analysis.

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